

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, now that help to Haiti is on the way and that we are doing the best we can to save lives and to reconstruct lives in that torn country, I think this is a good time to look back and to give some thought to people's reaction to what happened in Haiti, to do sort of a post-mortem of the post-mortem. And particularly I want to revisit one comment that was made after that time, the comment by Pat Robertson. He claimed that the earthquake in Haiti was the result of a pact with the devil that the people of Haiti had made to achieve an end to slavery and independence at the beginning of the 1800s.

I thought that was an interesting comment to make. It turns out that there were two devastating earthquakes in Haiti before their independence, before their so-called pact with the devil, before their end to slavery. And in the 200 years plus since their so-called pact with the devil, Haiti has actually been pretty much earthquake-free.

Now you compare that to the neighboring country, the Dominican Republic. In 1946, the Dominican Republic had a devastating earthquake, actually, it's hard to believe, ten times more powerful than the earthquake that Haiti experienced 2 weeks ago. The Dominican Republic had no pact with the devil, and therefore, if I can use the word "therefore" in this context, was laid low. So under Pat Robertson's logic, one would have to conclude that, in fact, Haiti has benefitted tremendously by what he would depict as a pact with the devil.

And I wonder, in contrast, how well Pat Robertson's followers have made out with their own pact with the devil. And what I mean is this: Pat Robertson ran for President in 1988. He did something in that year that nobody has done before or since. He brought 3 million volunteers to his campaign. He got millions of people involved in the Republican Party all across the country. In the end, he came in third. But he activated the Christian right. And all those people joined the Republican Party with something in mind, a couple of things in mind. One thing they wanted was an end to gay marriage. And for years, when the Republican Party was in charge of this country, the House, the Senate, the Supreme Court, the Presidency, the Republican Party did nothing to accomplish that for Pat Robertson's followers.

Similarly, these people wanted an end to abortion in America. And I'm not going to say whether that was right or wrong, whether they are right or wrong, but I will point out to you that when the Republicans were in charge, the House, the Senate, the White House and the Supreme Court, once again, they did nothing to help Pat Robertson's followers accomplish what they wanted.

So tonight I ask those people, the Christian right: What about your own pact with the devil? How has that worked out for you?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FORTENBERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Orleans (Mr. CAO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, the New Orleans Saints are going to the Super Bowl for first time in franchise history. As their representative to Congress, I want to congratulate them in an official manner by acknowledging words of encouragement from constituents on the House floor.

Sunday's thrilling and historic win was an inspiration to the residents of Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, who continue to struggle to rebuild their lives 4 years after Hurricane Katrina. I'm proud to be their Congressman, and I look forward to an exciting Super Bowl in which they will defeat the Indianapolis Colts.

Tonight, I will read several statements from my district in their honor. The first statement is from Kay Higginbotham, a teacher at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans. Kay writes, Do the Saints have an impact on education? As a school administrator, I believe the impact is immeasurable and far exceeds economics. The value lessons are much greater than an awareness of team colors. Students certainly enjoy spirit days or completing math problems with a Saints bent, but they also spend time discussing the job of a professional athlete, what it means to stay focused, eat healthy food, get plenty of exercise and sleep, follow rules, work as a team, and be a good sport, win or lose.

Teachers help students understand the importance of following parent and teacher directives, and when talking about the Saints, they link it to the attention each player must pay to the coaches' play-calling. They discuss the pride one feels in the hard work of a job well done, the discipline it takes to make a wise choice, both on and off the field, and the consequences that ensue if one doesn't.

Is the job of a student so different from the job of a New Orleans Saint? When interviewed, Saints players speak about having faith in their team and giving back to the community. They talk about developing self-confidence and leadership and overcoming

adversity, values important in a game, but even more important in life. And parents report something incredible: Dinner conversations that include the whole family. Brothers are amazed at how much their sisters understand about first-downs and touchdowns. And sisters actually want to hear what their brothers know about Drew Brees and Reggie Bush.

Do the Saints have an impact on education? Yes, indeed. They give us lessons worth teaching and learning.

The second statement is from Cindy Hilbrink of New Orleans. Cindy writes, While city accountants calculate the financial impact of the Saints football team to New Orleans, citizens know, as one writer to the local paper said, that despite failures of Federal, State, and local governments after Katrina, and suggestions that we don't merit help, we are, nevertheless, deserving—deserving of a winning team, of good schools, the best health care, safe roads, bridges and reliable levees.

When the population was only trickling back into New Orleans that summer of 2006 after Hurricane Katrina, when politicians and pundits urged that the city be abandoned, the sign on the dominant building in New Orleans, the Superdome, with its patched roof and iconic status as the symbol of suffering, said, 'Our team, our home.'

Bumper stickers in the Saints' black font read, 'Faith.' Drew Brees, the new quarterback who took a chance on the team and the city, printed T-shirts to benefit children that implored, 'Believe, New Orleans!' A popular Saints song contends 'This is the way we live,' meaning we are enabled to survive by clinging to our faith in this team. Our devotion to the New Orleans Saints, win or lose, keeps our battered spirits alive.

Finally, I want to close tonight with a prayer for the Saints delivered by Archbishop Philip Hannan at the first Saints and Sinners banquet in 1968.

Our heavenly Father, who has instructed us that the Saints by faith conquered kingdoms and overcame lions, grant our Saints an increase of faith and strength so that they will not only overcome the Lions, but also the Bears, the Rams, the Giants and even those awesome people in Green Bay. May they continue to tame the Redskins and fetter the Falcons as well as the Eagles. Give to our owners and coaches the continued ability to be as wise as serpents and simple as doves, so that no good talent will dodge our draft. Grant to our fans perseverance in their devotion and unlimited lung power, tempered with a sense of charity to all, including the referees.

May our beloved Bedlam Bowl be a source of good fellowship, and may "The Saints Come Marching In" be a victory march for all, now and in eternity.